United Nations A/72/542–S/2017/878

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
19 October 2017

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-second session
Agenda item 44
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Letter dated 18 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 17 October 2017, addressed to you by Mehmet Dânâ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative

17-18520 (E) 261017

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 18 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to communicate with you regarding the letter sent to you by the Representative of the Greek Cypriot administration of Southern Cyprus, dated 3 October 2017, and circulated as a document of the United Nations (A/72/507-S/2017/831). That letter contains categorically false information and makes baseless claims regarding the relationship between the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Turkey in an attempt to exert and impose its own political agenda regarding the island on the wider international community. In this connection, we deem it necessary to set the record straight in our capacity as the relevant authority on the matter, rather than abandoning public opinion to the mercy of the biased Greek Cypriots.

Ever since the forcible expulsion of the Turkish Cypriot people from the 1960 partnership Republic of Cyprus and the grave human rights violations that ensued, the Turkish Cypriots have been suffering in an ongoing struggle for existence. Turkey's most prominent role in that struggle has been putting an end, in 1974, to the ethnic cleansing campaign of the Greek Cypriots and Greece. The intervention of Turkey can only be classified as a peace operation, not an occupation, which not only prevented the annexation of Cyprus to Greece, but also laid the foundations for peace, stability and democracy on the whole island, as well as the region.

Since then, the sole source of support for the Turkish Cypriots in their struggle to safeguard their very existence has come from Turkey, without which the Turkish Cypriot people would have no other choice but to be assimilated by a people with whom they do not share any organic ties aside from the obvious geographic ones. Thus, the natural inclination to collaborate with Turkey is in fact the result, not the cause, of unilateral Greek Cypriot sovereignty claims on an island where sovereignty was originally limited to and depended on the shared administration of the island.

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which was established on the basis of the inalienable right to self-determination in the light of the prevailing realities, is nothing short of a full-fledged democracy where the rule of law prevails, all State institutions are intact and the Parliament represents the will of the people. However, the Turkish Cypriots continue to suffer under inhumane isolation and restrictions. The only gateway to interact with the international community is through Turkey. In this connection, the policies that have been formulated to end the unjust isolation and to allow the voices of Turkish Cypriots to be heard in the international arena are carried out by the two countries in close cooperation and are in no way the result of an imposition by Turkey. Until those restrictions are either eased or removed, the aim is to provide the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus with the opportunity to interact to the greatest possible extent with the rest of the world. To give one recent example of the challenges we face, it should be recalled that the Greek Cypriot side has unilaterally halted the work of the Bicommunal Ad Hoc Committee on European Union Preparation, which intended to prepare the Turkish Cypriots to implement the acquis communautaire of the European Union. It is, thus, sheer hypocrisy for the Greek Cypriot representative to accuse Turkey of attempting to "Turkify" the North while precluding the Turkish Cypriots' only opportunities to develop ties with any country or organization other than Turkey.

In terms of the economic links with Turkey, economic development programmes were adopted in 2000 in order to overcome the growing structural and economic problems resulting from the banking crisis in the Turkish Republic of

Northern Cyprus that occurred at the beginning of 2000; economic and financial cooperation protocols were signed to enable Turkey to provide financial and technical support to those programmes. The aim of the economic protocols signed between the two countries is to enable the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to achieve economic self-sufficiency, not dependency.

The Greek Cypriot representative's claims of demographic change and colonization agendas are also baseless, to say the least. As is often reported by international media outlets, the Greek Cypriot side follows a citizenship-by-investment programme in which the rich are practically sold citizenship in exchange for purely monetary gain. The Turkish Cypriot side, on the other hand, meticulously conducts its citizenship affairs in line with strict regulations and gives careful consideration to each case.

As for the allegations concerning religious education, the Greek Cypriot side is the least credible authority to speak on this matter. The Greek Orthodox Church is not only heavily embedded in religious instruction in schools in the South, but is also embedded in the Greek Cypriot political structure, devoid of any degree of secularism. The Church has done little more than to incite enmity and racism against the Turkish Cypriot people and their institutions, as well as Muslim cultural heritage on the island. Historically, the Church has also outwardly denounced all proposed settlement plans to the Cyprus issue by appealing to the Greek Cypriot community's rejectionist customs. The intertwined nature of religion and politics has ensured that the younger generations grow up with the same rejectionist sentiments as the generation that perpetuated utter violence and hate against the Turkish Cypriots in the past. In contrast, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus prides itself on its secularism and ability to distinguish between political agendas and the freedom of religious expression.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to remind you that, for 50 years, the Cyprus negotiations have failed to produce a positive outcome, owing to Greek Cypriot intransigence and claims of the island's overriding Hellenic nature. That intolerance for the Turkish Cypriot side's credible claims to partnership — on which the 1960 Republic of Cyprus was founded — has further intensified in recent years, manifesting itself in innumerable hate crimes, the prevention of international interaction with Turkish Cypriots in all fields of life and the most recent failure in the closest the Cyprus negotiations have come to reaching a viable settlement on the island. Along with this recent failure, it is safe to say that the Greek Cypriot side has also shut the door to any settlement under the existing parameters for the sole purpose of extending its hegemonic claims over the entirety of the island at the expense of the Turkish Cypriot people. In the light of the above, it is inconceivable that the Greek Cypriot side would have the audacity to purport to understand the realities of our situation better than we do. Thus, it is the hope and expectation of the Turkish Cypriot side that the international community will choose reason over propaganda and defamation, and recognize that the Turkish Cypriots' sole intention is to improve their circumstances to the furthest extent possible, given the many challenges they face, and that we endeavour to do so with our own free will.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 44, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mehmet **Dânâ**
Representative